

110TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. 163

Designating the third week of April 2007 as “National Shaken Baby Syndrome Awareness Week”.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 20, 2007

Mr. DODD (for himself, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. COLEMAN, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. BAYH, Mr. BENNETT, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. DOMENICI, Mrs. CLINTON, Mr. HATCH, Mr. SALAZAR, and Mr. LIEBERMAN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to

RESOLUTION

Designating the third week of April 2007 as “National Shaken Baby Syndrome Awareness Week”.

Whereas the month of April has been designated “National Child Abuse Prevention Month” as an annual tradition that was initiated in 1979 by former President Jimmy Carter;

Whereas the most recent National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System figures reveal that almost 900,000 children were victims of abuse and neglect in the United States in 2005, causing unspeakable pain and suffering to our most vulnerable citizens;

Whereas among the children who are victims of abuse and neglect, more than 4 children die in the United States each day;

Whereas children aged 1 year or younger accounted for approximately 42 percent of all child abuse and neglect fatalities in 2005, and children aged 3 years or younger accounted for approximately 77 percent of all child abuse and neglect fatalities in 2005;

Whereas abusive head trauma, including the trauma known as “Shaken Baby Syndrome”, is recognized as the leading cause of death of physically abused children;

Whereas Shaken Baby Syndrome can result in loss of vision, brain damage, paralysis, seizures, or death;

Whereas a 2003 report in the Journal of the American Medical Association estimated that, in the United States, an average of 300 children will die each year, and 600 to 1,200 more will be injured, of whom $\frac{2}{3}$ will be babies or infants under 1 year in age, as a result of Shaken Baby Syndrome, with many cases resulting in severe and permanent disabilities;

Whereas medical professionals believe that thousands of additional cases of Shaken Baby Syndrome and other forms of abusive head trauma are being misdiagnosed or are not detected;

Whereas Shaken Baby Syndrome often results in permanent, irreparable brain damage or death to an infant and may result in extraordinary costs for the provision of medical care to the infant in just the first few years of life of the infant;

Whereas the most effective solution for ending Shaken Baby Syndrome is to prevent the abuse, and it is clear that the

minimal costs of education and prevention programs may prevent enormous medical and disability costs and immeasurable amounts of grief for many families;

Whereas prevention programs have demonstrated that educating new parents about the danger of shaking young children and how they can help protect their child from injury can bring about a significant reduction in the number of cases of Shaken Baby Syndrome;

Whereas education programs have been shown to raise awareness and provide critically important information about Shaken Baby Syndrome to parents, caregivers, daycare workers, child protection employees, law enforcement personnel, health care professionals, and legal representatives;

Whereas “National Shaken Baby Syndrome Awareness Week” and efforts to prevent child abuse, including Shaken Baby Syndrome, are supported by groups across the United States, including those formed by parents and relatives of children who have been killed or injured by shaking, whose mission is to educate the general public and professionals about Shaken Baby Syndrome and to increase support for victims and the families of the victims in the health care and criminal justice systems;

Whereas Congress previously designated the third week of April 2001 as “National Shaken Baby Syndrome Awareness Week 2001”; and

Whereas Congress strongly supports efforts to protect children from abuse and neglect: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

1 (1) designates the third week of April 2007 as
2 “National Shaken Baby Syndrome Awareness
3 Week”;

4 (2) commends those hospitals, child care coun-
5 cils, schools, community groups, and other organiza-
6 tions that are—

7 (A) working to increase awareness of the
8 danger of shaking young children; and

9 (B) educating parents and caregivers on
10 how they can help protect children from injuries
11 caused by abusive shaking; and

12 (C) helping families cope effectively with
13 the challenges of child-rearing and other
14 stresses in their lives; and

15 (3) encourages the citizens of the United States
16 to—

17 (A) remember the victims of Shaken Baby
18 Syndrome; and

19 (B) participate in educational programs to
20 help prevent Shaken Baby Syndrome.

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